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Doctors are Most Likely Adults to be Involved in Auto Accidents

Yes, doctors are most likely, after students, to be involved in car accidents. In a study performed by the Quality Planning Corporation, a review of one million drivers nationwide, including Hawaii, showed that students were at the top with doctors number two. It is easy to understand students positioning at the top of the list, considering their inexperience. Students were rated number one in accidents (155/1000 drivers per year) as well as number one in speeding violations (87/1000 drivers per year). At the bottom of the accident list of 40 professional and occupational pursuits were farmers at 43 per 1000 drivers per year.

Speeding violators were represented by a different group of occupations with enlisted military personnel (78), manual laborers (77), politicians (76), and architects (72) per 1000 drivers per year. Doctors were not speeders - only 44/1000 drivers per year.

But why are physicians at 109 per 1000 drivers per year so high on the accident scale? The American Medical Association suggests that the long work hours, especially in internship and residency programs, may be a factor. The use of cell phones while driving may also be implicated in these high statistics.

Because state law prohibits using criteria such as age, gender, credit history, marital status and occupation in determining insurance premiums, I was not able to obtain more specific information about Hawaii accident and speeding rates for physicians nor for any other group. Some data is available from the Hawaii Department of Transportation - Public Affairs, and can be found at their web site: <http://www.state.hi.us/dot/publicaffairs/safecommunities/crashstats/demo-fatal.htm>

Data about major traffic accidents, injuries and traffic deaths from 1988 to 1998 is available in Hawaii, by county. As anticipated with increasing population, the number of traffic accidents is increasing. The above web site has information under the following headings: New Driver Education Law, Traffic Laws, Crash Statistics, and Safe Community Programs.

Mahalo to Mike Leidermann, Honolulu Advertiser Transportation Writer, and Merle Stetser, PhD, for their information.

The take-home message: physicians are #2; let's try harder not to be #1. Watch the speed limit; enjoy red wine for cardiovascular health, but not prior to driving; pull over when returning urgent cell phone calls.



Any questions, comments, or concerns?

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